

IN THE CLAIMS

The following claim listing replaces all prior listings and versions of the claims:

The Following is a Complete Listing of the Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A network system connected with multiple master devices, comprising:

a plurality of slave devices connected to a network that transmit and receive data through the network;

~~at least one~~ a master device ~~that is configured to receive a control command from a network manager~~ and to output state information in response to the control command to control the plurality of slave devices; and

a network manager configured to generate the control command and to that automatically ~~assigns~~ assign a network address to the ~~at least one~~ master device to connect the ~~at least one~~ master device to the network when the master device is ~~one of~~ newly connected to the network ~~and additionally connected to the network with which an existing master device is connected.~~

2. (Currently amended) The network system as set forth in claim 1, wherein the network manager comprises:

a master-device discriminator that determines whether the ~~at least one~~ master device is newly connected to the network and that determines whether a unique address is associated with the ~~at least one~~ master device;

a search packet transmitter that generates a search packet for searching for the unique address associated with the ~~at least one~~ master device and that transmits the

generated search packet to the ~~at least one~~ master device; and

an address notifier that transmits the unique address of the ~~at least one~~ master device to ~~all~~ a plurality of home appliances connected to the network.

3. (Currently amended) The network system as set forth in claim 2, wherein the address notifier comprises:

a plug-in notifier that notifies ~~all~~ the plurality of home appliances ~~connected to the network~~ of the unique address of the ~~at least one~~ master device when the unique address is searched and is found for the ~~at least one~~ master device; and

a specific address notifier that automatically generates a specific address when the search of the unique address is not successful and transmits a specific address notification packet for the notification of the generated specific address to ~~all~~ the plurality of home appliances ~~connected to the network~~.

4. (Currently amended) The network system as set forth in claim 3, wherein the specific address notifier automatically generates a specific address when a slave device is additionally connected to the network and transmits a specific address notification packet for the notification of the generated specific address to the ~~at least one~~ master device ~~connected to the network~~.

5. (Currently amended) The network system as set forth in claim 2, wherein the network manager further comprises:

a counter connected to the search packet transmitter that counts the number of

attempts to search for the unique address associated with the ~~at least one~~ master device.

6. (Currently amended) The network system as set forth in claim 5, wherein the counter comprises:

a determinator ~~comparator/determinator~~ that determines when the search of the unique address corresponding to the ~~at least one~~ master device is unsuccessful, and that further determines when the number of attempted searches ~~exceeds~~ exceed a predetermined number of searches; and

a specific address requestor that outputs a control signal to request the specific address notifier to automatically generate a specific address when the address search is determined by the determinator ~~comparator/determinator~~ to be unsuccessful.

7. (Currently amended) The network system as set forth in claim 2, wherein the network manager further comprises:

a data packet transmitter that generates a data packet containing state information of an existing master device and the plurality of slave devices connected to the network and transmits the generated data packet to ~~an additionally connected at least one the~~ master device and ~~an the existing at least one~~ master device, when the ~~at least one~~ master device is additionally connected to the network ~~with which the existing at least one master device has already been connected.~~

8. (Currently amended) A method of operating a network system connected with ~~one or more master devices,~~ at least one master device, the method comprising:

(a) connecting a new master device to a network with which a plurality of slave devices are connected;

(b) searching for a unique address associated with the master device; and

(c) notifying ~~all~~ a plurality of home appliances connected to the network that the master device ~~having~~ comprising the unique address has been appropriately connected to the network.

9. (Currently amended) The method as set forth in claim 8, wherein notifying further comprises:

~~(b-1)~~ repeating a search of the unique address associated with the master device; and automatically generating a specific address and assigning the generated specific address to the master device when the search of the unique address is unsuccessful.

10. (Currently amended) A method of operating a network system connected with ~~one or more master devices,~~ at least one master device, the method comprising:

(a) connecting a ~~new~~ home appliance to a network with which a plurality of slave devices and an existing master device have been connected;

(b) notifying at least one of the plurality of slave devices ~~home appliances~~ that the ~~new~~ home appliance has been connected to the network by transmitting a unique address assigned to the ~~new~~ home appliance to the at least one of the plurality of slave devices ~~home appliances connected to the network~~;

(c) determining whether the ~~new~~ home appliance is a master device and transmitting, to the ~~new~~ home appliance, a data packet containing state information of at least one of the

plurality of slave devices ~~home appliances connected to the network~~ when it is determined ~~that the new~~ home appliance is the master device; and

(d) transmitting the data packet to the existing master device when the existing master device ~~connected with the network~~ is used along with the ~~new~~ master device.

11. (Currently amended) The method as set forth in claim 10, wherein the determining further comprises:

notifying ~~the~~ an additionally connected slave device of the unique address of the master device ~~connected to the network~~ when the connected a slave device is ~~additionally~~ connected to the network.